

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-35 and 37-49 are pending in the application. Responsive to the Office Action dated 17 May 2006, applicants have amended the claims, cancelled claim 36 and added a new claim 49 (shown in the Listing of Claims attached hereto) in order to more particularly and completely claim the present invention. No new matter has been introduced. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102**

Claims 1-6, 12-16, 27, 28, 35-46 and 48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Montgomery (US 5,191,326). The remaining claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montgomery in combination with other references. Reconsideration is requested.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to clarify that data are extracted “from the uplink data stream” and “the extracted data [are transmitted] to an intended downhole tool.”

The Examiner has cited col. 2, lines 60-68, and col. 3, lines 6-9, of Montgomery as disclosing “extracting any data intended for downhole tools.” Office Action at page 2. However, Montgomery does not disclose or suggest that data are extracted from uplink data stream and the extracted data are transmitted to a downhole tool. Montgomery mentions transmitting downlink packets with messages for any tool (col. 3, lines 8-9), but is silent as to extraction of data from uplink data stream and transmission of the extracted data to downhole tools.

Independent claim 14 has been also amended to clarify that the “extracted uplink ITC data [are transmitted] to one or more of the plurality of downhole tools.” In this, as discussed above, Montgomery does not teach that uplink ITC data are extracted and transmitted to downhole tools.

Similar amendments have been made to the other independent claims.

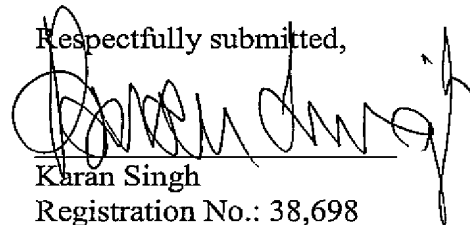
For the reasons discussed above, Montgomery does not disclose or suggest the features of independent claims 1, 14, 27, 35, 37 and 40. Accordingly, claims 1, 14, 27, 35, 37 and 40 should be allowable and each claim that depends from one of the independent claims should be also allowable for at least the same reasons.

**Conclusion**

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicants believe that the present application and claims 1-35 and 37-49 are in proper condition for allowance. Such allowance is earnestly requested.

In the event that any additional fees or credits are due owing to this response, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the amount necessary to cover any fee that may be due or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 50-1122.

Respectfully submitted,



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